GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2359
ANSWERED ON:30.07.2002
DECLINING READING HABIT AMONGST YOUTH
PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a decline, over the years, in reading habit amongst the youth;

(b) if so, the steps proposed by the Government to promote healthy reading; and

(c) the amount advanced by the Government during each of the last three years for the purchase of books by different institutions?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. RITA VERMA)

(a),(b) &(c) No such survey is done by the Government. However over the years, reading habits may have declined amongst the youth especially in the towns and cities due to over exposure to television and other electronic media.

The Government is already organising various book promotional activities for spreading reading habit among the youth throughout the country directly as well as through National Book Trust. NBT organizes book fairs and festivals at village, district, state and national levels. Books are taken by NBT to even remote areas throughthe mobile book vans. National Book Week is celebrated throughout the country in collaboration with various organisations of writers, publishers, booksellers, librarians, schools, universities and NGOs. As a matter of policy, 10% discount is routinely allowed during the book fairs. Through the Readers' Club programme, NBT encourages establishment of school libraries. Seminars and symposia etc. also strengthen the relationship between the readers and books. The Ministry directly also administers a scheme namely "Book Promotional Activities" under which grants are given to voluntary organisations for organising book fairs, seminars, workshops etc. on subjects related to book promotion. The Government of India celebrated the year 2001 as the "year of books" from 23 April,2001 to 23 April,2002 with the slogan 'Book for all and all for Books' to sustain reading habits among youths. During the "year of books" various activities were organized by NBT and other governmental institutions(central and state government) which were conducive for promoting reading habit.

No separate grant is given to institutions for purchase of books.